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General

Poland is bounded by Germany on the W; Russia, Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine on the E; Slovakia and the Czech Republic on the S; and the Baltic Sea on the N.

The climate is temperate with cold, cloudy, moderately severe winters with frequent precipitation and mild summers with frequent showers and thunderstorms.

The terrain is mostly a low-lying plain, becoming more hilly in the S inland third of the country and mountainous along the border with Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.

Buoys marking areas closed to navigation are painted yellow with two red stripes forming a cross when viewed from above and may exhibit white or red flashing lights.

Military zones may be marked by buoys stamped with the letters "SN." Areas in which explosives have been dumped, and mined areas, are marked by white conical buoys with a large letter "A" in red. Buoys serving as survey marks are conical and painted in blue and red bands.

The limits of fishing areas or fish conservation areas may be marked by either spar or conical buoys painted in yellow and black bands with the letters "RYB" which may carry a yellow spherical topmark.

Cables are marked by black conical buoys with a white letter "K." The limits of an anchorage are usually marked by red or black conical buoys with a white anchor symbol.

Buoys marking a canal entrance are conical and painted yellow above black. Measured distance buoys are usually oval in shape, painted yellow and red, divided vertically, and may carry topmarks consisting of one, two, or three red spheres.

Currency

The official unit of currency is the zloty, consisting of 100 groszy.

Firing Areas

Vessels of naval units, anchored and unable to show prescribed anchor lights, shall show two white lights visible for 2 miles around the horizon. One light is placed close above the hull at the stern; the other on the bow at a greater height.

One of a group of naval vessels at anchor can show one blue light independently of other prescribed lights. Vessels in single column formation, except for the last vessel, can show two white lights in addition to the prescribed stern light. One of these lights, shown from the mainmast, is beamed toward the stern; the other light is carried above the stern light.

Ships engaged in practice firing exercises display a red flag at the masthead. At night, a red light visible all around the horizon, is shown above the prescribed white light on the foremast.

The following areas will be temporarily closed to fishing and navigation, at times promulgated by the Polish authorities.

These areas are used for military and gunnery exercises:

Area No. 1a

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°23'54.5"N, 18°59'50.4"E.
- b. 54°27'54.5"N, 19°02'50.4"E.
- c. 54°27'54.5"N, 19°22'56.2"E.
- d. 54°23'54.5"N, 19°21'26.2"E.

Area No. 1b

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°27'54.5"N, 19°02'50.4"E.
- b. 54°32'54.5"N, 19°06'38.3"E.
- c. 54°32'54.5"N, 19°23'08.1"E.
- d. 54°27'54.5"N, 19°22'56.2"E.

Area No. 2

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°32'54.4"N, 18°34'02.6"E.
- b. 54°33'12.4"N, 18°33'44.6"E.
- c. 54°37'18.4"N, 18°35'38.6"E.
- d. 54°37'12.4"N, 18°36'38.6"E.
- e. 54°33'06.4"N, 18°34'38.6"E.

Area No. 5

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°36'06.4"N, 18°44'20.5"E.
- b. 54°38'24.4"N, 18°40'56.5"E.
- c. 54°40'00.4"N, 18°41'02.5"E.
- d. 54°36'48.4"N, 18°45'44.5"E.

Area No. 6

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°32'42.3"N, 16°32'33.8"E.
- b. 54°41'00.2"N, 16°16'27.9"E.
- c. 54°47'24.2"N, 16°46'21.5"E.
- d. 54°35'18.3"N, 16°50'41.4"E.

Area No. 6a

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°35'54.3"N, 16°44'51.6"E.
- b. 54°34'06.3"N, 16°44'51.6"E.
- c. 54°34'06.3"N, 16°41'51.7"E.
- d. 54°35'54.3"N, 16°41'51.7"E.

Area No. 6b

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°28'54.3"N, 16°25'51.8"E.
- b. 54°35'24.2"N, 16°08'46.0"E.
- c. 54°41'00.2"N, 16°16'27.9"E.
- d. 54°32'42.3"N, 16°32'33.8"E.

Area No. 9

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions (this area lies outside the territorial waters of Poland):

- a. 54°41'00.2"N, 16°16'27.9"E.
- b. 54°46'24.2"N, 16°08'33.9"E.
- c. 54°52'30.1"N, 16°45'21.5"E.

- d. 54°47'24.2"N, 16°46'21.5"E.

Area No. 9a

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°47'24.2"N, 16°46'21.5"E.
- b. 54°52'30.1"N, 16°45'21.5"E.
- c. 55°00'36.1"N, 16°40'45.5"E.
- d. 54°44'06.2"N, 15°47'58.1"E.
- e. 54°35'24.2"N, 16°08'46.0"E.
- f. 54°41'00.2"N, 16°16'27.9"E.

Area No. 10

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°47'48.3"N, 18°25'56.6"E.
- b. 54°55'42.2"N, 18°34'50.5"E.
- c. 54°51'54.3"N, 18°43'20.4"E.
- d. 54°44'24.3"N, 18°35'20.5"E.

Area No. 11

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°44'24.3"N, 18°35'20.5"E.
- b. 54°51'54.3"N, 18°43'20.4"E.
- c. 54°45'30.3"N, 18°57'50.3"E.
- d. 54°38'54.4"N, 18°49'50.4"E.

Area No. 12

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°05'42.7"N, 14°44'22.8"E.
- b. 54°07'06.4"N, 14°50'40.8"E.
- c. 54°03'06.4"N, 14°52'58.7"E.
- d. 54°01'54.4"N, 14°46'40.8"E.

Area No. 13

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°00'30.4"N, 14°27'53.0"E.
- b. 54°03'42.4"N, 14°27'53.0"E.
- c. 54°06'24.4"N, 14°36'22.9"E.
- d. 54°02'48.4"N, 14°36'22.9"E.

Area No. 14

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°36'48.4"N, 18°46'44.5"E.
- b. 54°36'06.4"N, 18°44'20.5"E.
- c. 54°35'12.4"N, 18°44'32.5"E.
- d. 54°35'12.4"N, 18°46'32.5"E.
- e. 54°36'24.4"N, 18°47'32.5"E.

Area No. 15

Enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°33'06.4"N, 18°33'44.6"E.
- b. 54°33'06.4"N, 18°35'20.6"E.
- c. 54°32'06.4"N, 18°35'20.6"E.
- d. 54°32'06.4"N, 18°33'44.6"E.

Former Mine Danger Area No. 10

All waters S and W of lines joining the following positions:

- a. 54°52'N, 13°25'E.
- b. 54°52'N, 13°48'E.
- c. 54°07'N, 14°25'E.
- d. 54°15'N, 14°45'E.
- e. The coast in longitude 14°45'E.

Within former NEMEDRI Danger Area No. 10, the following areas have been swept in addition to the established routes:

Sassnitz Approaches E of Rugen

- a. 54°31'N, 13°42'E.
- b. 54°36'N, 13°42'E.
- c. 54°32'N, 13°46'E.

Swinoujście Approaches E of Sassnitz

- a. 54°15'N, 14°12'E.
- b. 54°16'N, 14°10'E.
- c. 54°31'N, 14°06'E.
- d. 54°28'N, 14°08'E.
- e. 54°15'N, 14°12'E.
- f. 54°20'N, 13°59'E.
- g. 54°24'N, 13°56'E.

Government

Poland is a democratic state with 16 provinces. The capital is Warsaw.

Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

Jan. 1, New Year's Day; Easter Sunday; Easter Monday; May 1, Labor Day; Corpus Christi; July 22, National Holiday; Nov. 1, All Saints Day; Dec. 25, Christmas Day; and Dec. 26, Boxing Day.

Ice

Icebreakers

Icebreakers use signals of the International Code. Poland has a small number of icebreakers to aid ships in coastal shipping lanes during the ice season. Icebreaker headquarters, located at Gdynia and Szczecin, are under the authority of the Port Captain. Radio communication with either location or with patrol planes will bring aid to icebound vessels.

Any vessel requiring future icebreaker assistance must register at the harbor master's office at least 24 hours in advance of arriving or departing port. Ships not reinforced for ice, or having no valid ice certificate, will not be led to Szczecin harbor, but can dock at Swinoujście.

Industries

The main industries include machine building, iron and steel, extractive industries, chemicals, shipbuilding, food processing, glass, and textiles.

Languages

The official language is Polish.

Mined Areas

Former Mine Danger Area No. 16

This former NEMEDRI Danger Area is enclosed by lines joining the following approximate positions:

- a. 54°13'N, 14°54'E.
- b. 54°17'N, 14°47'E.
- c. 54°26'N, 15°02'E.
- d. 54°22'N, 15°09'E.

Former Mine Danger Area No. 19

This former NEMEDRI Danger Area is enclosed by the following approximate positions:

- a. 54°28'N, 19°39'E.
- b. 54°30'N, 19°34'E.
- c. 54°26'N, 19°14'E.
- d. 54°31'N, 18°57'E.
- e. 54°29'N, 18°56'E.
- f. 54°29'N, 18°57'E.
- g. 54°27'N, 18°54'E.
- h. 54°24'N, 18°54'E.
- i. 54°24'N, 18°59'E.
- j. 54°21'N, 19°00'E.

Within Area No. 19 is a swept route with its centerline joining the following approximate positions:

- a. 54°26'N, 19°13'E.
- b. 54°23'N, 19°08'E.
- c. 54°23'N, 19°00'E.

The route is 0.5 mile wide between positions a and b, and 0.3 mile wide between positions b and c.

- a. 54°21'N, 18°55'E.
- b. 54°23'N, 18°54'E.
- c. 54°24'N, 18°48'E.
- d. 54°22'N, 18°48'E.
- e. 54°25'N, 18°40'E.
- f. 54°25'N, 18°40'E.
- g. 54°25'N, 18°39'E.
- h. 54°26'N, 18°39'E.
- i. 54°26'N, 18°39'E.
- j. 54°26'N, 18°39'E.
- k. 54°26'N, 18°39'E.
- l. 54°27'N, 18°39'E.
- m. 54°27'N, 18°39'E.
- n. 54°27'N, 18°36'E.
- o. 54°29'N, 18°36'E.
- p. 54°31'N, 18°35'E.
- q. 54°31'N, 18°34'E.
- r. 54°31'N, 18°33'E. then along the coast to
- s. 54°32'N, 18°34'E.
- t. 54°35'N, 18°44'E.
- u. 54°36'N, 18°50'E.
- v. 54°38'N, 18°51'E.
- w. 54°50'N, 18°38'E.
- x. 54°48'N, 18°27'E.

Pilotage

Pilotage is compulsory for all foreign ships, including harbor movements, with some exceptions. See Pub. 194, Sailing Directions (Enroute) Baltic Sea, Southern Part.

If, because of severe weather conditions, the pilot cannot come aboard the ship, then the pilot vessel may make the appropriate signal from the International Code and lead the vessel to a position where the pilot can safely board.

Incoming ships can communicate directly with the following pilot stations: Swinoujscie, Szczecin, Gdynia, and Gdansk.

Deep-sea pilotage services for the Baltic Sea may be ordered through the pilot stations or harbor masters of the following ports at least 24 hours in advance: Gdynia, Swinoujscie, and Szczecin.

Regulations

The following extracts are taken from the general harbor regulations for Polish harbors:

1. The harbor administrative authority is the Port Captain, or in smaller ports, the Port Boatswain.
2. Vessels at all times should show such lights or shapes as may be required by the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collision at Sea.
3. A vessel lying in the roadstead and on entering or leaving the port shall fly her national flag at any time of the day.
4. Port orders apply equally to anchorages outside of the port area and the fairways connecting those anchorages with the port.
5. Ships entering port, entrances to channels or port basins must give way to vessels leaving. Overtaking in fairways leading to port entrances and under bridges, is prohibited.
6. Vessels underway within the port area must have at least one anchor ready for letting go.
7. All vessels are forbidden to approach the quay or berth, secure themselves there, or shift berth in harbor without first obtaining permission from the Port Captain. In harbor all large vessels must go dead slow. At night or at times of poor visibility the speed of a vessel should be appropriately decreased.
8. Permission to enter port must be requested from the harbor master via radiotelephone, or International Code signals by flag or signal lamp, giving the name of the ship and call letters.
9. The harbor master grants permission by radiotelephone, signal lamp, or by displaying the code flag "C" and the call letters of the ship. In addition to the general harbor regulations for Polish harbors, ships must adhere to special local regulations established for each harbor and enforced by the harbor master.
10. Vessels of 150 grt and above bound for Gdansk and vessels over 500 grt bound for Gdynia, when passing latitude 54°45'N, should contact the harbor master (via "REPLINE HEL") of Gdansk on VHF channel 14 or the harbor master of Gdynia on VHF channel 12 and report the following information: name and call sign of vessel, date time group, position, port of destination and ETA to the roadstead, general type and amount of cargo, type and amount of cargo, type and amount of liquid or noxious substances, maximum draft in meters, and any deficiencies of the vessel. Deficiencies including overloading, excessive trim, dangerous heel, maneuvering problems, uncleaned tanks, fouled ballast water, rinsings, remains of solid noxious cargo, or any possible pollution or leakage problems should also be reported.

Search and Rescue

The Polish Ship Rescue Service (PRO), is an organization available for search and rescue of persons and ships, as well as other objects in danger in the Baltic Sea.

The PRO has rescue ships on duty 24 hours a day in the following ports: Tolkmicko, Gorki Zachodnie, Gdynia, Hel, Wladyslawowo, Leba, Ustka, Darlowo, Kolobrzeg, Dziwnow, Trzebiez, and Swinoujscie.

Rescue Coordination Centers of the PRO are located in Gdynia and Swinoujscie. Rescue ships on duty, amphibious rescue vehicles, and aircraft assigned for rescue operations carry the mark of the Maltese Cross.

Radio communications during an emergency at sea are maintained via coastal radio stations which guard 500 kHz, 2182 kHz, and 156.8 MHz (Radio Gdynia, Radio Witowo, and Radio Szczecin).

The PRO cooperates as needed with the rescue organizations of foreign countries, navigation and fishing enterprises, and the Polish Coastal Rescue Service. Coastal rescue stations are located at Swibno, Wladyslawowo, Leba, Ustka, Darlowo, Kolobrzeg, Dziwnow, and Sztutowo. Harbor masters are in charge of coastal rescue stations.

The Polish Navy and Polish Border Guard Units transmit immediately to the nearest rescue coordination center of the PRO and the nearest harbor master's office, or boatswain's office, of a port, all observations made from military observation points of distress signals at sea, or accidents observed at sea.

At the request of the PRO, units of the health service will give medical assistance on the coast, and aboard ship if transportation to the ship is available.

Signals

Vessels may determine whether a port is open for entry or departure by contacting the Captain of the Port by VHF radiotelephone.

Port Closed

In case of an emergency, the following signal indicates that entrance into the port is absolutely prohibited:

1. By day.—Three balls in a vertical line.
2. By night.—Three red lights in a vertical line.

Traffic Signals

The following signals are normally shown from a mast at the harbor master's office:

1. Entrance Prohibited:
 - a. By day.—A cone point up between two balls in a vertical line.
 - b. By night.—A white light between two red lights in a vertical line.
2. Entry and Departure Prohibited and Harbor Movements Prohibited.—
 - a. By day.—Two cones points together over a ball in a vertical line.
 - b. By night.—A white light with a green light above it and a red light below it.

Customs vessels display a white pennant with a green border and show two green lights over a white light from the masthead.

Storm Signals

Storm signals are shown in Poland in cases of actual or forecasted winds greater than Force 4 as indicated in the table below.

Special Services Ships

Ships of Special State Services display their service flags, by day, where best seen.

At night, a green light is shown above the light on the foremast.

Citizens' Militia vessels, while on duty, show a blue all around light located above the white light on the foremast.

Border Patrol Ships while on duty, in order to apprehend another vessel, may, by day, fire two green flares and hoist L of the International Code; at night, two green lights in a vertical line may be shown. This signal means "Border Patrol, stop your engines."

A special state service ship desiring to stop another vessel will sound two long and two short blasts.

Submarine Operating Areas

Polish submarines on the surface show lights prescribed by international regulations.

Ships convoying and exercising with Polish submarines display "NE 2" by day, and at night three blue lights are shown vertically on the yardarm of the mast in addition to all other prescribed lights.

Sunken submarines are equipped with salvage and telephone buoys; the former spherical painted in white and red checkers and the latter drum-shaped, red and white. Both buoys have green double collars between which a cable is wound.

A salvage buoy, if found, should not be touched. Its position should be reported by radio to the Fleet Commander, Gdynia.

The name of the submarine is painted on both buoys. The telephone buoy has two position lights and instructions in Polish, English and German.

The position and any telephone communication received from the submarine should be reported to the Fleet Commander, Gdynia. Great care must be taken to avoid damaging the cables.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is ALPHA (-1).

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is situated at Aleje Ujazdowskie 29/31, 00-054 Warsaw P1.

The mailing address is American Embassy Warsaw, US Department of State, Washington, DC 20521-5010.

Polish Storm Signals		
Event	Day signal	Night signal
Strong winds, Force 4-5	A yellow cylinder	A green light over a white light
Gales, Force 6	A black ball	A white light over a green light.
Northwest storm, Force 8	A black cone, point up	Two red lights
Southwest storm	A black cone, point down	Two white lights
Northeast storm	Two black cones, points up	A red light over a white light
Southeast storm	Two black cones, points down	A white light over a red light
Hurricane, Force 12	A black cross	A green light between two red lights in a vertical line
Note. —A red flag shown with any of the storm signals indicates the wind is veering. Two red flags shown with any of the storm signals indicates the wind is backing.		